

Dear Colleague,

Federal employees are a common subject of political debate, but reality of the federal workforce is quite different from the caricatures presented on the campaign trail and in the press. We hope that this letter will help dispel some common myths about federal employees.

Myth:

Most federal employees live in or near Washington, D.C.

Fact:

85% of the federal workforce does *not* live in this region. Texas has more federal employees than Maryland, and Alaska has more federal employees per capita than Virginia.

Myth:

Federal employees earn far more than private sector employees, on average \$120,000 per year.

Fact:

Federal employees earn 22-24% *less* than private sector employees in comparable jobs, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which conducts the most in-depth study of pay. The widely-cited \$120,000 figure inaccurately counts future pension payments, which include employee annuity contributions, as wages.

Myth:

Most federal employees work in agencies related to education, regulation, or welfare.

Fact:

63% of federal employees work for agencies whose primary purpose is national security. The *smallest* executive branch departments are Education and Housing and Urban Development.

Myth:

The federal government has grown larger than ever before.

Fact:

The federal government is the *smallest* it has been in the last 60 years, relative to the US population and size of our economy. The number of federal civilian employees per 1,000 Americans has shrunk steadily from 13.2/1,000 in 1962 to 8.4/1,000 today.

Myth:

It is nearly impossible to fire a federal employee.

Fact:

11,668 federal employees were fired last year.

We strongly support efforts to reduce the long term federal deficit, and are certain that there are opportunities to cut costs in the federal government. For example, reducing the number of federal data centers, reducing federal electricity consumption, and reducing employee turnover would all save taxpayer money and improve efficiency. What will not save money are short-sighted cuts that undermine national security and public safety. Federal employees go to work every day defending America from terrorists, tracking down and prosecuting child predators, and maintaining the infrastructure on which our economy relies. Turning these civil servants into a political punching bag is a disservice to the American people.

Sincerely,

Gerald E. Connolly

Jim Moran